

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, Rhode Island 02908

MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 11, 2008

Time: 6:00 PM

Attendance: Lori, Travis, Mary, Jen, Marc, Karen, Carol

Minutes recorded by: Karen Fifer Ferry

Minutes Approved on: April 8, 2008

Interpreters: Carol Fay, Jon Henry, Elizabeth

Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairperson Marc Gursky at 6:07PM in the RI School for the Deaf Conference Room.

Travis moved, Carol seconded moving into Executive session.

II. Executive Session

- a. Motion** was made by Trustee Travis to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(1), (2). Seconded by Trustee Dorros. Approved unanimously.
- b. Motion** was made by Trustee Travis to return to Open Session. Seconded by Trustee Fifer Ferry. Approved unanimously.

III. Open Session

- a.** Motion was made by Trustee Fifer Ferry to seal the minutes of Executive Session. Seconded by Trustee Mary. Approved unanimously.
- b.** The Chair reported that in Executive Session the Trustees voted unanimously to approve retaining Attorney Andrew Heineous in connection with teacher appeal hearings scheduled for May.
- c.** BOT has voted unanimously to change July 8 to 15
- d.** The Chair reported that in Executive Session the BOT voted unanimously to recognize Jon Plante's service to school in conjunction with graduation with a letter and plaque/certificate.

IV. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

e. February 12, 2008

- i.** The reference to non-renewal letters was changed to "recommendation".
- ii.** **Motion** was made by Trustee Fifer Ferry to approve the minutes of February 12, 2008 as amended. Seconded by Trustee Travis. Approved unanimously.

V. Public Comment

- a.** Trustee Zellner read the BOT response to the letter read by Amy Lupica at a previous Board meeting.
- b.** Presentation by RIDE re: test scores has been postponed by RIDE to April meeting.
- c.** Mary Bird gave some feedback regarding accessibility during the recent basketball tournament. The wheelchair ramp was blocked and fire lane was blocked. Signage or color painting were suggested. Lori has followed up to support that request. Jonathan added fire lanes are painted and handicapped signage is ready to go into ground when unfrozen.

VI. Reports

- a.** Director
 - i.** Strategic planning – Lori is trying to arrange a video conference with Facilitator Mulholland.
 - ii.** Commissioner's visit scheduled for today and tomorrow was cancelled and postponed to a later date by the Commissioner's staff. Staff, teachers, parents reacted to the cancellation; it was beyond Director's control. Cancellation was due to the quantity of the interpreters available, poorly matching team members for the observation, desired meetings with teachers, parents and BOT to talk about the visit. Marc added that today he had conversations with Rick Richards, team leader, David Abbott and Peter McWalters that he was very angry that cancellation was made, unilaterally, 5:30 the night before. Gursky shared his view that it was unprofessional and discourteous. Chair Gursky read the Carol thanked Lori for notifying parents and asked that we convey to Richards that parents need time to accommodate the new scheduling.
 - iii.** Lori attended a workshop by the RI Parent Educational Network (RIPEN) re: basic rights of special education. Lori will share with parents, teachers and BOT. Lori is looking into RIPEN presenting at open house.
 - 1.** RIDE is coming March 19 with review of report for School Support System.
 - iv.** Graduation requirements: HS team met on March 4th. Dinaz and

Lori met with Sharon Lee last week of February re 4 areas to focus on getting preliminary approval. Teachers had the opportunity to look at binders at RIDE from approvals of other schools. Every Tuesday going forward, teachers will go over to RIDE to do more review. Next staff development day, taking place on March 20th, info will be shared on finishing expectations due on September 2nd. Because of coverage issues and testing issues, this will be done in the fall. Thee Commissioner will be signing the diplomas through 2010. Lori has asked for letter confirming this.

- v. Marc asked if we are submitting our response earlier than the fall. We are currently not approved. Lori determined that academic bowl, science fair, graduation, school performance, commissioner visit, alternative assessment, asl and writing assessments would take up teachers' time over the next few months. Lori's concern was not to pull teachers out of classrooms. March 20th, with appropriate leadership, timeline will be established for September submission of preliminary approval.
- vi. Chair Gursky said that showing progress may be enough to resubmit and get preliminary approval before graduation. Chair Gursky reiterated that this is of the highest priority. Trustee Carol asked that there be communication with the parents on status of this. Director said that will happen by end of next week. John Carty reiterated the State position on September submission. Chair Gursky asked again that this happen for June. Dinaz offered to go back to RIDE and ask for prioritization but Lori said RIDE wants all four at the same time. Chair and Director will communicate directly with Sharon Lee and then Director will assess if it can be done. Trustee Travis does not want BOT forcing issue to create unnecessary tension between Administration and Staff or BOT and Staff. Chair does not want to create unnecessary tension but necessary tension is okay. We need to clarify what is required to meet requirements. If Chair and Director still disagree, Chair will bring it back to BOT. Director wants BoT to be aware that there is progress happening; the issue is all the other priorities and the impact on the other areas. Children's goals need to be balanced. Director and Staff stress need to be balanced.

VII. Sub-Committees and Coordinators Reports

- a. Deferred.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. **Motion** was made by Trustee Mary to adjourn meeting at 9:00 PM.
Seconded by Trustee Jen. Approved unanimously.